

# TRANSPARENCY IN NOUNS

**A COMPENDIUM OF VIEWS**

**transfix /traen'sfiks/ verb (perh. with bor. or punishment; pierce with sharp implement or upon.**

**transform /traens'fɔ:m/ verb change form, appear., character, etc. of, esp. considerably; change shape etc. of (alternating current)**

**transformation /-fe'mel/ noun.**

**former noun apparatus for reducing or increasing voltage of alternating current.**

**transfuse /traens'fju:z/ verb (-sing) transfer blood or other liquid into blood vessel to replace lost; pernicate. □ transfusion noun.**

**transgress /traen'zgres/ verb infringe (law etc.); step (limit laid down); sin. □ transgressor noun; transgressor noun.**

**transient /traenziənt/ adjective of short duration; brief. □ transience noun.**

**transistor / traen'zistər / noun semiconductor capable of amplification and rectification; (full transistor radio) portable radio using transistors.**

**transistorize verb (also -ise) (-zing or -sing) to fit with transistors rather than valves.**

**transit /traen'zɪt/ noun going; conveying, being conveyed; passage, route; apparent passage of a body across meridian of place or across a planet. □ in transit (while) going or being conveyed.**

**transition /traen'zɪʃn/ noun passage or change from one place, state, condition, style, etc. to another. □ transitional adjective; transition adverb.**

**transitive /traen'sitiV/ adjective (of verb) requiring object expressed or understood.**

**transitory /traen'sitiV/ adjective not lasting; brief, temporary.**

**translate /verb (-ting) (often + into) another language or in an able; interpret; move or person, place, or condition. □ translatable adjective; translation noun.**

**transliterate /verb (-ting) represent corresponding charac-**

**ters of another script. □ transliteration noun.**  
**translucent /traen'sluens/ adjective allowing light to pass through, semitransparent. □ translucence noun.**

**transmigrate / traenz'mal'greɪt/ verb (-ting) (of soul) pass into different body. transmigration noun.**

**transmission /traenz'mɪʃn/ noun transmitting, being transmitted; broadcast programme; device transmitting power from engine to axle in vehicle.**

**transmit /traenz'mɪt/ verb (-tt-) pass or hand on, transfer; communicate or be medium for (ideas, emotions, etc.); allow (heat, light, sound, etc.) to pass through. □ transmissible adjective; transmittable adjective.**

**transmitter noun person or thing that transmits; equipment used to transmit radio etc. signals.**

**transmogrify /traenz'mɔgrɪfaɪ/ verb (-ies, -ied) jocular transform, esp. in magical or surprising way. transmogrification noun.**

**transmute /traenz'mju:t/ verb (-ting) change form, nature, or substance of; historical change (base metals) into gold. □ transmutation noun.**

**transom /traen'səm/ noun horizontal bar in window or above door, (in full transom window) window above this.**

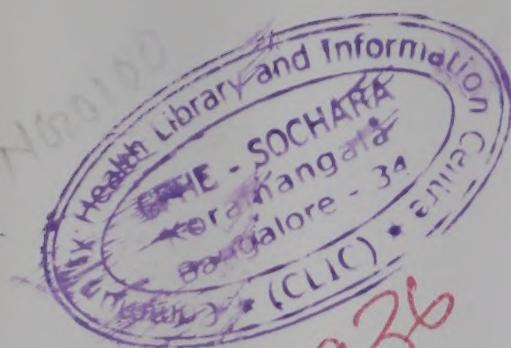
**transparency /traen'spærənsI/ noun (plural -ies) being transparent; picture (exp. photograph) to be viewed by light passing through it.**

**transparent /traen'spærənt/ adjective allowing light to pass through and giving maximum visibility possible; (of disguise, pretext, etc.) easily seen through; (of quality etc.) obvious; easily understood. □ transparently adverb.**

**transpire /traen'spaɪə/ verb (-ping) of secret, fact, etc.) come to be known; happen; emit (vapour, moisture) or be emitted through pores of skin etc. □ transpiration /-spl/ noun.**

**■ Usage The use of transpire to mean 'happen' is considered incorrect by some people.**

**transplant ● verb /traen'spla:nt/ plant elsewhere; transfer (living tissue or organ) to another part of body or to another body. □ noun /traen'spla:nbt/**



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# **TRANSPARENCY IN NGOs**

## **A Compendium of Views**

Compiled By  
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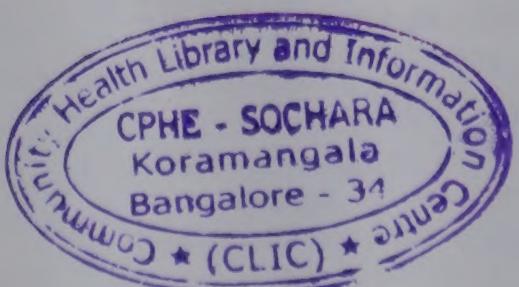


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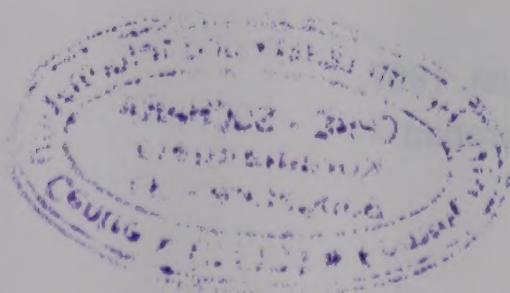
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# PREFAC

NGOs while dealing with the complexity of enabling people to address the contextual issues with dignity and strength, also grapple within their organizations to bring an optimum fit between human resources, structure and systems, so that the ultimate goal of Social Development is met.

In such a scenario, one of the key concerns is the issue of transparency. The Social Development Centre of the Academy of HRD, thus found it necessary to address the issue and gather information on Transparency. This information can be used by NGOs and academicians, which will have rich payoffs such as improvement of management practices in NGOs, research, training etc.

A letter to that effect was sent to a variety of people working in the NGO sector requesting them to write to us on the issue of transparency.

This compendium is a compilation of the 55 detailed responses received from the NGO representatives on the meaning, scope, anomalies and challenges with respect to transparency.

The seriousness with which the contributors have responded can be seen from the rich details and experiences which have been shared. To retain the spirit, I have abstained from content editing to the maximum extent.

This compendium would not have been possible without the contribution of many. I take this opportunity to thank Balaji, Grace, Nagesh, Shankar, Sita, and Susheel of the team from AHRD who by their help and support made this compendium possible.

The ways in which this compendium can be used is left to the ingenuity of the reader.

August, 1997.  
Hyderabad

Roshan Jose

**ANIL VERMA**

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transparency is being perfectly clear.

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should be in respect to the systems and procedures.

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o that things are clear for everyone.

reasons for non-transparency

transparency is there. It depends on how much an individual has tried to understand the system and procedures.

ctions for increasing transparency

imely feedback should be given.

ossible negative consequences

y being transparent nothing could be negative; By lack of transparency, there can be a state of confusion.

**1. Meaning**

Transparency means openness in all respects.

**2. Scope**

Transparency should be in all respects-funding, salaries and in interpersonal relations.

**3. Need**

The reason for existence of an NGO is that it belongs to a cause, and no one individual or group of individuals. Transparency will enhance participation, as issues will be considered passionately by all, and, a common pool of wisdom will emerge. This will also help individual thinking to dovetail with the objectives of the NGO further, wherein people will be more accountable.

**4. Actors**

All superiors should be transparent to subordinates, colleagues and beneficiaries should be transparent to the organization.

**5. Reasons for non-transparency**

In many ways Deepalaya is very transparent. However there are some who don't feel it. This appears to be due to poor interpersonal relations and lack of communication.

**6. Actions for increasing transparency**

This can be done at two levels.

- i) general level - at workshops, big and small group meetings.
- ii) personal level - with the help of an external agent.

## Possible negative consequences

- i. In being transparent, there can be no negative effects which can't be resolved
- ii. In not being transparent-negative aspects are serious and many; it can lead to bad interpersonal relationships, unionization among the NGOs, bad reception of programmes by the people etc.

## **MS ANJALI SINHA**

*Deepalaya*

### **1. Meaning**

Transparency can be considered to mean Accountability to the people at the grassroots; accountability to the NGO /action group with whom you are connected and accountability towards one's staff.

### **2. Scope**

Transparency should be there in interpersonal-interactions and inter-organizational relationships.

### **3. Need**

Need for transparency arises because one can get proper feedback because of it.

### **4. Actors**

Ideally transparency has to be a reciprocal process. If every agent at the grass root level is expected to be transparent towards one-self, towards the people with whom he/she interacts, then it is expected that they also reciprocate in the same manner.

### **5. Reasons for non-transparency**

If the overall atmosphere in the organization is not conducive enough for democratic interaction at various levels and if a few active agents have certain manipulative tendencies then it results in lack of transparency.

### **6. Actions for increasing transparency**

Process of interaction at various levels should be enhanced to increase transparency.

### **7. Possible negative consequences**

It is possible that transparency may give rise to democratic tendencies in the initial phase and may create a fear of losing discipline. Lack of transparency will be accompanied by lack of initiative, and democratization in the long run.

## Other views

Transparency as an attitude is easier said than done. NGOs even if they strongly advocate transparency should make more sincere attempts to enhance and inculcate transparency at all levels.

**1. Meaning**

Relations which may be distinctly seen through; ideas which can be communicated without hesitation by taking others into full confidence.

**2. Scope**

Transparency should be in our aim, action and result.

**3. Need**

To prove ourself and our actions.

**4. Actors**

Men with full confidence should be transparent to men who think themselves to be smarter.

**5. Reasons for non-transparency**

Transparency is lacking as people are self-centered, there is job- insecurity and an inherent negative competitive attitude.

**6. Actions for increasing transparency**

Trust oneself and others.

**7. Possible negative consequences**

Misunderstanding and bad quality of work influence planning.

## ME NOT GIVEN

### Meaning

Transparency means openness-sharing of information freely without inhibitions/barriers; In other words- straight forwardness.

### Scope

Schemes availability, fund raising avenues, accessibility to a general information/data/resource, are some of the areas where transparency is needed.

### Need

Many a time smaller organizations show much more productivity potential. Organizations are not aware of the details or information. Therefore their expansion is affected.

### Factors

Government departments/academic institutions/funding agencies should be transparent to the NGOs. It is also important that the NGO must be transparent to its community.

### Reasons for non-transparency

Monopolistic behaviour of certain NGOs/ vested interests of certain government officials/consultants of certain donor agencies.

### Actions for increasing transparency

Print out all the scheme details and send it across the nook and corner of the nation.

Make the employees of NGOs aware of the required information/data, regarding the organization and its objectives.

### Other views

Transparency will benefit smaller NGOs; the castles of the larger size corporate NGOs will break. These walls/barriers are to be broken in the interests of the nation.

# NAME NOT GIVEN

## 1. Meaning

"Transparency" means clear & creative understanding about self and others. It reflects positive correlations in the following qualities:-

- i) Perception by others.
- ii) Thinking by others
- iii) Action by others

It indicates those human tendencies which provides required outcomes when any body is stimulated for attaining an objective or goal.

- Transparency helps develop a mind which is open to learn something from comments and suggestions
- A Transparent person can freely talk to anybody due to his openness and can receive and deliver feedback.
- In the word Transparency" there is no confusion,no explanation is needed. It is clear and transparent.

## 2. Scope

These are few reasons in my perception and opinion:-

- a. It promotes interpersonal relation and strength among the personnel.
- b. It ensures clear communication. It treats the different psychological problems arising among subordinates, colleagues, and between organization and employees. Actually transparency is the mechanism process of organization to educate employees regarding the organization.
- c. It helps/promotes the freshers.
- d. It creates a sense of worthiness and mutual honesty. Ultimately people and the organization become more developed, productive and feel themselves closer to their objective.

- e. It promotes the profession in the true sense.
- f. It promotes philosophical outlook and freedom of expression. Ultimately, because of transparency, the organization and people involved are developed, become more productive and the organizational goals become more dear and clear. In this sense there is no place for punishment but everyone is open to rectify one's mistakes.
- g. It is a process of capacity building in an individual.

#### Need

Some areas which according to me where transparency is needed are:-

With respect to Employees;

For promoting interpersonal relationships.

The team leader must be transparent to colleagues. Transparency is also the responsibility of the colleagues in the area of interpersonal relationship in one's day to day activity, transparency can be increased by imparting their new ideas and sharing knowledge, information etc.

Organizations must provide clear picture about objectives, activities, programme outcomes, long-term planning.

#### Actors

Employees should be transparent to the community

- The community should be transparent to the crusader organization
- Every employee should be transparent to his co-worker, colleagues, subordinates.
- Top Management must be transparent in dealings with subordinates.

#### Reasons for non-transparency

Lack of conceptual clarity, lack of ownership, selfishness, interpersonal/ego clashes, lack of personal goal / objective, misunderstandings, lack of clarity etc. contribute to lack of transparency in few areas of programme and organizational policy. Organizations must ask employees' expectations from

time to time, act on their feedback and try to fulfill them. There should be regular counselling for employees from the organization. Employees must be evaluated from time to time.

## 6. Actions for increasing transparency.

Organizations should be more flexible towards their employees. Mutual trust should be developed between management and the employees. Freedom should be enhanced.

## 7. Possible negative consequences

Some negative consequences of being very transparent are as follows:-

- Credibility at the personnel level - would be hampered .
- Interpersonal conflicts may increase

Due to lack of transparency, there may be:-

- mistrust -misunderstanding.
- possibility of misinterpretation in message.
- chain of problems would be created.
- lack of conceptual clarity.
- dissatisfaction in and detachment at work/daily activity.
- innovative ideas will be discouraged .
- learning habits would be diminished.

### Meaning

Transparency in an organization means shared knowledge of its long term and short term objectives and clear understanding of processes involved in achieving them. In addition to this, well defined clear understanding of peoples' roles, clarity on money being utilized and the purposes for which it is being spent and in what measures, makes the organization transparent.

The above needs to be explicit in the organization's documents, and processes should be known to all members.

### Scope

Resource utilization & allocation including that of Human resources should be done in a transparent manner.

### Need

Internally it helps to develop healthy team spirit, greater commitment to processes, mutual respect, cooperation and mutual support, greater identification with the organization. Externally a healthy organization image gets built up because of the quality of behavior of its measures and hence leads to greater credibility.

### Actors

There is nothing like 'who must be transparent to whom'. The whole organization must be transparent.

### Reasons for non-transparency

There are certain grey areas presently in the organization, specially with regard to clarity of short term objectives, which affects in achieving long term goals. Role clarity too is missing in certain cases combination of these two lead to a certain amount of confusion among the staff, non acceptance of each other, and related non acceptance of work demands surrounding these roles, leading to interpersonal problems, negligence etc.

Allocation of funds and its utilization is pretty well understood by the staff. Reviews and discussion are done often enough to ensure transparency.

## **6. Actions for increasing transparency**

A well laid out organizational design which will provide for clear-cut roles, would go a long way in promoting transparency. Strategies should be clear cut, short term objectives should be well defined along with processes which will be understood by all members of the organization.

## **7. Possible negative consequences**

No negative consequences of transparency can be anticipated.

ictionary meaning of transparency is clarity and clearness. When it comes to a personal understanding of the word, the term means how open you are when someone wants to probe into your activities, ideology and pattern of working. One should not have the feeling that the other person is looking at you with a feeling of distrust, but should feel that she/he wants to have a better understanding.

One should be transparent in terms of organization's objectives or what the organization aims to achieve by its intervention. Secondly 'transparency' with regard to utilization of funds and maintaining records of the beneficiaries.

Transparency is required in NGOs as they are accused of misusing funds, specially the organizations which doesn't have proper documentation and accounting.

NGO should be transparent to the donors and well wishers, who would be interested to know how their donation has brought change in the circumstances. It is debatable whether NGOs are answerable to the government bodies, since their transparency level is a questionable issue and it's a well known fact how much corruption exists in the government. Nevertheless there is no harm in being in the good books of the government.

I don't think transparency is not present in NGOs, it is only matter of fact as to how much interest does the common man take to know about the happenings in the social sector. Human tendency is to form an opinion, without going in to the depth. Often allegations are made that despite having so many NGOs what change has it brought in the overall situation in the country. Nobody seems to analyse the root cause for the collapse in the mechanism, it is the population, the level of poverty, unemployment, child labour and corruption. This unbalanced growth in population has dwarfed the achievements of the development sector.

A few 'black sheeps' in the NGO sector have set a bad precedent by not maintaining proper documentation and utilization of records. Transparency can be increased by paving the way for the press to visit the project locations catered by the organization, since they are the people who generally help people to form their opinion on any issue. But the question is how interested is the fourth estate in reporting commendable achievements of the developmental agencies. Their sole always revolve to create a sensation by highlighting only the short comings served in the NGO sector. It's good to be critical but certainly one should not have a negative attitude. Secondly transparency can be increased by direct communication with the masses which can be in the form of street plays, awareness drive or holding demonstrations to spell out the issues the organization

is striving to achieve. Thirdly NGOs can involve notable citizens in the board of the organization which would add to their credibility.

Negative consequence of transparency can be that the slightest error in the system gets prominence rather than the achievements. Transparency can be aptly compared to an open book which can be read in a positive manner but others can always misread the contents. However lack of transparency can create a feeling of suspicion or mistrust.

Transparency is about openness. It implies the absence of hidden agendas, and the ability to learn from experience. It is an attitude that should permeate every level of teamwork and decision-making, based on a culture of trust. Transparency needs to be part of an institutional culture in which organizational objectives are established through participation, and then accepted as the benchmark for the legitimacy of individual goals. It is about leadership that has the stamina to share its experience as a resource that can help others to develop. It is the decision-making processes that most clearly need to be transparent. None of this is easy. A culture of trust takes years to build and openness can be misunderstood. The biggest problem is that so many institutions are prisoners of success, and the admission of failure is still uncomfortable for many. Yet, how can we learn except from trial and error? And how can we learn from trial and error unless these experiences in problem-solving are shared? That is what transparency offers to us all, a culture of learning. Not many of us are comfortable with negative feedback about ourselves or our work, nor do we know how to handle such feedback in a way that builds people rather than destroy them. Transparency and trust enable us to cope and to grow through constructive and supportive analyses of events. Organizations committed to the service of others have a particular challenge to face in this regard. Their motives and their practices must be clear to those they serve, as well as to those where they need help. To be 'transparent' to the world demands first that we be transparent to ourselves as a team and as colleagues. Transparency takes stamina, and it comes with time, bringing with it a credibility that can be enormously strengthening in the most difficult of times.

## **1. Meaning**

Transparency means being able to see through, being frank and having clarity. It means openness and absence of interpersonal barriers between two individuals and between two parties or between the giver and the receiver. It reflects one's attitudes or perception towards others' thinking, actions and reactions. It is a two-way process.

## **2. Scope**

Transparency should be at:

- a) Interpersonal level - to clear ambiguity and to promote interpersonal relation, to develop team spirit, to reduce conflicts and confusions and to encourage mutual understanding.
- b) Organizational level - to improve the quality of job, enhance skills and to achieve the organizational objectives, to build up democratic atmosphere where people feel free to express their views, and improve themselves with appropriate feedback thus enhancing and encouraging creativity and innovations.
- c) In the area of organization policy, transparency should exist with respect to the rules and regulations, concept, goal, plans, programs and budget.

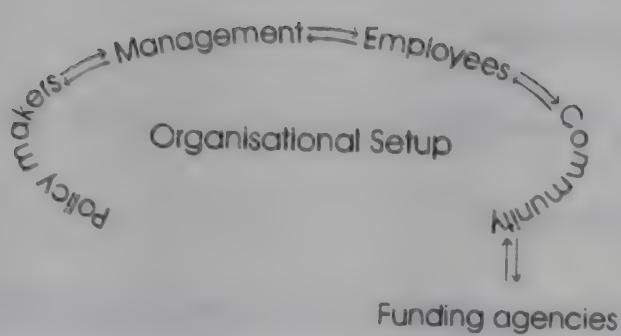
## **3. Need**

To promote interpersonal relationship; in one's day to day activities

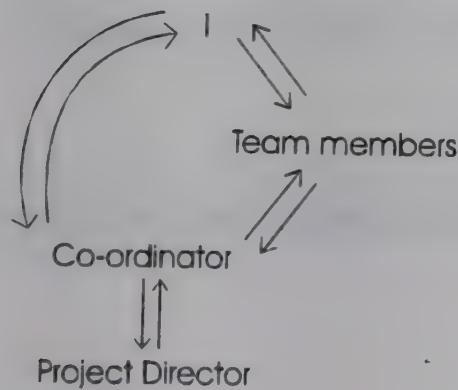
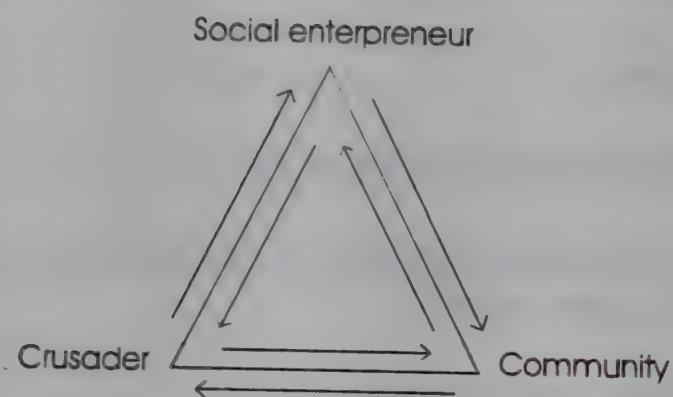
- imparting and gaining new knowledge, skills and building linkages.
- to ensure enthusiastic participation of all, from top to bottom and vice versa, in all activities for the feasibility of programme implementation. At the community level transparency helps in dealing with socio-economic problems. It also helps in establishing linkages with other NGOs and government departments.
- In the area of accountability

Actors

A.



B.



Reasons for non-transparency

Lack of transparency is due to organizational policies.

job insecurity

egoism, jealousy, partiality

- competition
- selfishness, and religion
- lack of adequate knowledge, education in certain fields
- lack of skills, confidence
- lack of clarity of goals, rigidity in rules and regulations
- misunderstanding, biases
- lack of proper communication
- lack of trust etc.

## 6. Actions for increasing transparency

If the above mentioned features are removed, we will be able to increase transparency to some extent.

## 7. Possible negative consequences

- May affect one's accountability to others and to the organization
- Misuse of resources, men, money, material
- Can raise conflicts
- Possibility of mis-perception, interpretation of message
- Misguidance
- Breaks discipline
- Objectives cannot be achieved
- Work may be affected.
- Lack of transparency .
- Affects proper project planning, implementation, its monitoring and evaluation.

- One can feel difficulty in
  - a) making decisions
  - b) budgeting
  - c) in identifying community needs.

The other consequences could be:

- self-development could be affected
- goals cannot be achieved
- divert oneself from actual process
- lack of clarity and raises confusion and conflicts
- can retard organizational image and quality of work
- raises dissatisfaction
- mis-management
- growth could be hindered.

Other views

It's a fact that no NGO can be fully transparent because it's the question of its own sustainability; transparency is possible to some extent only.

## 1. Meaning

Transparency means being clear, accurate, open in receiving and giving feedback. It involves a sense of dynamism and optimism in one's approach of doing things.

## 2. Scope

It promotes inter-personal relations, strengthens bonds and ensures clear communication. Transparency is one of the mechanisms of organizational re-engineering. It enhances "freshness". It creates a sense of worthiness and mutual honesty. It is the responsibility of the subordinate and the superior in ensuring transparency in the area of inter-personal relationship, personnel relationship in day to day activities, in imparting new knowledge and skills, linkages etc.

### The organizational context:-

The organization must provide a clear picture of its goals, programs, accounts, planning HRD policy etc. The Organization must seek employees'expectations and try to fulfill these expectations. Evaluation is a regular process employees should be asked about the corrective measures to be taken. Lowest strata should be given opportunity to be part of policy making. It will only improve reliability of a program.

### The community concern:-

We must be transparent in our day to day interaction with the community. Try to minimize vague expectations of the community and provide a clear picture of the program.

In a transparent organization everyone is free to suggest and express his/her feedback. There is no place for punishment; everyone is open to rectify one's mistakes. The process of capacity building ultimately leads towards good performance.

## 3. Need

Employees should be transparent for promoting interpersonal relationship.

## Actors

The team leader must be transparent to the subordinate. Crusader should be transparent to the community. The community should be transparent to the crusader. Crusader should be transparent to his co-workers and vice-versa. Coordinator administration, other superiors must be transparent in their dealings with crusader and vice-versa.

## Reasons for non-transparency

Expectations, lack of conceptual clarity, lack of ownership concept, selfishness, personal-ego-clash, lack of personal goal clarity, mis-understanding etc. all contribute to lack of transparency in some areas.

## Actions for increasing transparency

All the concerned people need to take measures for building mutual trust. Scope of freedom in work needs to be expanded. Acceptability has to be promoted. Organizations should be more flexible towards their employees.

## Possible negative consequences

These are the negative consequences of being too transparent -

- Personal credibility would be hampered.
- Interpersonal conflict may increase.

Negative consequences of lack of transparency:-

- mutual mistrust
- possibility of mis-interpretation of message
- problem of chain of command would be created.
- lack of clarity
- dissatisfaction and detachment from work
- innovative ideas will be discouraged
- learning habit would be diminished.

## 1. Meaning

Transparency is related to accountability; accountability to the sources from where one receives resources and for whom the resources are mobilized. It is an ethical question not a legal question.

## 2. Scope

It is with respect to both principle and practice:

- What one advocates (Anybody can question for inconsistent position taken)
- What one does (programme implementation, organization management linkage with outside environment, personal standards)

## 3. Need

- It will ensure the ethics of the profession
- Create natural guard against deviations.

## 4. Actions for increasing transparency

- Transparency is an ethical question. It should be delinked from bureaucratic norms, rules and procedure.
- Internal normative standards need to be developed.
- Create participatory mechanisms to involve primary stakeholders at all stages of organizational functioning.
- Best practices need to be highlighted rather than working practices. It will generate positive reference point which others can follow.

## 5. Possible negative consequences

There is no negative consequence of being transparent. But lack of transparency needs to be talked in such a way that it gives the bureaucracy a handle to control and restrict immoral practices.

## Other views

Transparency is a cultural, ideological and ethical issue. The more one is removed from people and their issues greater is the issue of transparency. Ethical issues need to be strengthened-not in a project context but in a more "spiritual" context.

We are in an environment where transparency can also be used against one's advantage. There is not much understanding about fair contracting procedure this is more of a cultural issue rather than professional expertise.

## 1. Meaning

Transparency means clarity in all things attached with any particular activity similar vision on each and every aspect.

## 2. Scope

Transparency should be in all aspects of each and every person. Activity Strategy and Policy should be transparent in every family, organization and team.

## 3. Need

To avoid confusion, to meet the target and achieve the goal successfully and timely and for maintaining good working relations, we need transparency.

## 4. Actors

Every one who is associated with each other and is working together should be transparent to each other,

- employee to employee (both side)
- junior to senior
- service giver to beneficiary
- NGO to government
- NGO to donor

## 5. Reasons for non-transparency

- Lack of Transparency is due to
- lack of openness
- lack of clarity on goals and objectives
- lack of interest

## 6. Actions for increasing transparency

Healthy working relations, openness in all issues may help to increase transparency.

## 1. Meaning

Being open, honest and unambiguous in every situation.

- In data collection/presentation of the data collected. - It should be timely, adequate and relevant
- In maintaining records
- Evaluation - understanding the issue
- Not favoring or fearing anybody.

## 2. Scope

Transparency in respect of (organization situation)

- i. Providing equal justice and opportunity to one and all
- ii. Evaluating without favor, fear, bias or prejudice
- iii. Value system established and expressed through Memos, Circulars etc.
- iv. Transparency can be established by ensuring a systematic monitoring system
- v. By evaluating each position with salary and responsibilities and making one comparative statement for evaluation
- vi) Organizations should respect each and every member
- vii) By removing characteristics like leg pulling, whisper campaign, groupism etc.
- viii) By replying to all queries with logic at the earliest
- ix) By encouraging loyalty to the organization and not for any individual.

### 3. Need

Transparency can help to build a loyal workforce and can establish and improve credibility of the organization to the outer world.

### 4. Actors

Every person/employee should be transparent to his/her supervisor, subordinate and peer groups.

### 5. Reasons for non-transparency

If there is no transparency in the system, the top management should establish it at the earliest. One thing to keep in mind is that like water, transparency, flows from top to bottom. To establish any system the management must generate loyalty through its expressed value system, openness, equality of justice and opportunity, proper monitoring and established evaluation process.

### 6. Actions for increasing transparency

To increase transparency in the organization, following steps should be taken:-

- i) Take proprietary interest in the organization
- ii) Show a high degree of trust
- iii) Share all problems
- iv) Help others when in need
- v) Encourage innovation, encourage failures
- vi) Create high performance situation
- vii) Help promote happiness
- viii) Practice constructive criticism

### 7. Possible negative consequences

There is every possibility of negative consequences because ultimately we as human are selfish and always try to calculate the profit and loss in a situation. This is not the ultimate truth. History of civilization has enough

evidence that no extra-clever person has ever won finally. Negative consequences will be there and if we face such issues positively, then we can make it positive. What is needed is openness along with logic and facts. Lack of Transparency creates lot of problems which we experience daily.

#### 8. Other views

For transparency in NGOs can be termed as the pillar of success. The period between 1979-1996 in the history of Deepalaya only tells that from five children and Rs. 17500/- total budget to 18500 children with an annual budget of Rs.3 crores is possible because Deepalaya is very transparent while dealing with the world.

## Meaning

Transparency is like a window, which allows an individual to see clearly through because it allows light to pass through without diffusion. To be transparent means, to let others know, what is required to be known to them. In other words, to be transparent means, not to conceal/hide any facts and let the other person exercise his right to know or see clearly and understand , what is required.

## Scope

Transparency should be in respect of the following:-

- a) Nature, behavior, attitude, sentiments and feelings
- b) Work, job, business, activities, transactions
- c) Self, organization
- d) Capability and skill
- e) Rules, policies, procedures, strategies and plans
- f) Successes and failures.

## Need

Transparency in NGOs is needed because,

- a) it is the strength of the organization which makes others trust and have faith and respect for the organization
- b) it enables easy fund raising
- c) the accountability gets fulfilled easily
- d) it enables social audit and community accountability, which should be a obligation for every NGO,
- e) transparency enables in reducing the frequent turnover of the professional cadre.

## Actors

NGOs should be transparent to the following:

- a) funding agency
- b) community for whom the fund is received

- c) employees, consultants and board members
- d) government

## 5. Reasons for non-transparency

Transparency is not there now because it is human tendency/nature to hide or conceal weaknesses, failures and negative points. Other reasons are:

- a) Lack of sharing
- b) Lack of broad mindedness
- c) Lack of faith and trust
- d) Lack of understanding the nature, behavior, sentiments and attitudes
- e) Fear of getting rejected, criticized, cheated, exploited, misused, over-taken and competition.
- f) Lack of professionalism in approach.
- g) Time constraints.

## 6. Actions for increasing transparency

The management should be of the opinion that transparency is the strength of the organization and not the weakness. To increase transparency the above mentioned points should be taken care of.

## 7. Possible negative consequences

The possible negative consequences of being transparent:-

- a) rejection
- b) criticism
- c) cheating
- d) exploitation
- e) misuse

Negative consequences of lack of transparency are:-

- a) fund raising and resourcing may become difficult
- b) lack of trust, faith and respect for the organization
- c) social obligation not fulfilled
- d) frequent turnover of professional cadre
- e) confusion due to lack of clarity
- f) no recognition or appreciation for the good work, activities or achievements

## Meaning

Transparency with regard to NGOs is doing what one says.

## Scope

It should be in respect to our deeds, advertisements and most important in fiscal matters.

## Need

If we are not transparent then the society, citizens and our own workers will be disillusioned and the organization will crumble.

## Actors

Every worker should be transparent in behaviour.

## Reasons for non-transparency

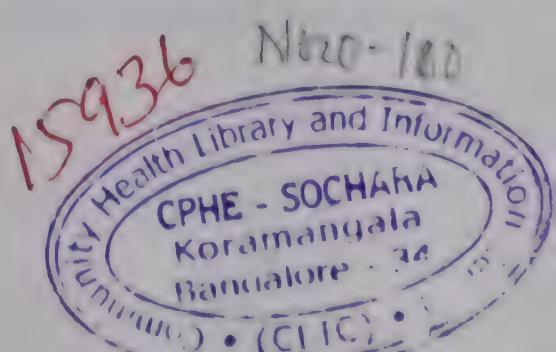
Transparency is not there now (in most of the NGOs) because with the advent of industrialization and commercialization we have forgotten the high ideals of human life, especially as taught in the Indian traditions. The habit of thinking above self should be inculcated throughout the NGO for increasing transparency.

## Actions for increasing transparency

It may look for sometime that a particular organization is not getting time-bound results and some workers may be frustrated but in the long-term it will be rectified.

## Possible negative consequences

Many organizations which are doing some work with ulterior motives (like religious conversion in the name of charity) may not feel proper to be transparent.



## 8. Other views

The expression "Transparency in NGOs", points out that NGOs are lacking something definitively and hence the hue and cry for "genuine" NGOs. Atleast in fiscal matters NGOs should become transparent.

## Meaning

Transparency means being without barriers, masks, and means clarity without ambiguity.

## Scope

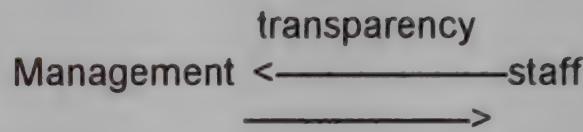
- a) in interpersonal relations
- b) policies relating to staff development
- c) organization's objectives
- d) money matters/resources
- e) all aspects of our lives

## Need

- a) I believe that to work effectively and efficiently there should be transparency between subordinates, employer and employee. Only when people are honest, sincere and frank with each other can real work be done. Only people with these traits can be together and sort out problems, because if people wear masks one will never really find solutions to problems and one will not get a clear picture of things.
- b) Policies should be clear, there should be no ambiguity so that staff knows what should be done.
- c) Organization's objective should be clear to all the staff so that work will move towards the goal accordingly.
- d) I believe transparency should be present in all the areas of our work. There should be no dichotomy in our private/personal life and professional life. eg. people who are working in the field of social development taking dowry when they get married. I believe it is a mockery when you say something but practice a different thing. I believe those people should not be used as instruments of change.

#### **4. Actors**

Transparency should be in all areas, like in Deepalaya the management should be transparent to the staff and the staff should be transparent to the management.



At the field level Deepalaya should be transparent to the community and community should be transparent to the organization.

#### **5. Reasons for non-transparency**

The value system is lacking at the organizational level, due to which there is no atmosphere of transparency.

People will be transparent if a conscious effort is continuously implemented for transparency to take root and become a way of life.

#### **6. Actions for increasing transparency**

At the organizational level the management should be transparent to the staff. Management should create an atmosphere wherein staff can freely express their views without fearing that they will lose their jobs. Initiative should always come from the learned. If there is a feeling of insecurity among the staff they will not give the complete picture in the field.

#### **7. Possible negative consequences**

The negative effect of transparency is that people (staff) can manipulate the management. Or if the staff is transparent the management can be a barrier to the person's development.

#### **8. Other views**

Transparency is a two way process. If people are not mature enough to take honest views and perspectives, transparency is of no use. Sometimes a person ends up with problems because he/she is transparent.

**R GOPALAKRISHNAN R**

*Head of the Department of Philosophy*

**Meaning**

To me, the term 'transparency' is nothing but the moral quality of being transparent for social development with open mindedness. NGO should be an openbook.

**Scope**

To me, transparency should be in social service and social development.

**Need**

To be non-corrupt, non-selfish and non exploitative.

**Actors**

NGOs should be transparent to the socially backward.

**Reasons for non-transparency**

Transparency is not there because of various problems both personal and public.

**Actions for increasing transparency**

To increase transparency, we should be very dynamic and service minded (not profit-minded). There is no hope and scope for indolence/narrow-mindedness.

**Possible negative consequences**

The negative consequence of lack of transparency is meaningless/normless life.

**Other views.**

Plain life, plain service and plain dealing should be the norm of NGOs.

## **MR JAGADHISH CHANDRA SAHOO**

### **MY-HEART**

Transparency is the condition between two parties which is responsible to each other to have clarity in the working relationship. Transparency should be in every nut and bolt of the NGO. It should be in work culture, policy, goal, future plan and finance system of the organization. It is necessary to lead a strong foundation for building up a healthy mission and to render better service to the target group.

Transparency should be in goals, policies and future plans. The vicious circle of moral degradation is the cause of "Decrease of Transparency". Social auditing is the key word to increase transparency. Lack of transparency hampers the process of genuine decision making. It creates conflict between workers, community and creates hurdles in the way of goals.

**R KASHINATH BHOOSNURMATH  
JPIN HUMAN WELFARE AND RESEARCH FOUNDATION**

**Meaning**

Adequate access to information.

**Scope**

Decision making and financial matters

**Need**

To further strengthen “mutual trust” and thus the process of development.

**Actors**

NGOs, donors, people with one another.

**Reasons for non-transparency**

Lack of demand for rightful information from the concerned.

**Actions for increasing transparency**

Increase the level of demand for it.

**Possible negative consequences**

Negative consequences of being transparent does not seem to exist.

Negative consequences of lack of transparency: misutilisation of resources (money, authority, etc); a complete death of value system and increase in disparities.

## **1. Meaning**

I personally understand the term “transparency” as “clear” and “visible”; it does indicate an openness in either sense of heart or mind and in deeds which to a large extent enable the other person to reciprocate it. It is applicable to each and every member of an organization.

## **2. Scope**

The term “transparency” itself emphasizes its wholeness, as it is a sort of developed quality or value. It is not confined to a single respect.

It is not that a person transparent in one matter is opaque in another matter. Transparency is evaluated from one's holistic approach. More informatively “What I am thinking, planning, and doing should be open to all in my organization - may it be in small groups like my family, my friends circle, my colleagues or my associates”.

## **3. Need**

“Transparency” in any set-up, increases efficiency in functioning. From a very generalized sector, i.e. a family to the subject specific area, i.e. an organization - it is the thread that ties up varied human perceptions to bring out a definite concrete change.

## **4. Actors**

My answer to the question no.1 highlights this aspect - “who should be transparent and to whom”.

To be very precise, a system sustains only when transparency is established every where in an organization, basically it is to be there within the members associated with the system. Every body, either head or associates being transparent can improve efficiency in a system. Rather a transparent value internalized and executed by all in their respective fields in an organization will serve the purpose.

## Reasons for non-transparency

Transparency is not there in NGOs because of the race for recognition, which generally does not persist among the NGO members during the days of infancy of any organization, where every work becomes a team work, commitment is owned by all and every success and failure is shared by all. The day an organization starts adding feathers to its component, it washes its hands of the very concept "transparency". The competition for shrewd materialistic success called "self advertisement" becomes the need of the hour and "lack of transparency" in NGO sector is the reflection of it. "If I will be transparent, I'll have to be open, every body will know my strengths and weaknesses. If they will know my weakness, I will be exploited by them and I will lose my value or position. So what is the need of being transparent? Why should I only be and why not others?--this is the bare feeling we generally have within us.

## Actions for increasing transparency

Any value cannot be generated or increased by the implementation of any rule or act. The value should internalize within oneself. However, certain basics can emotionally generate or increase transparency within a NGO but the effort is to be shouldered by the initiator in an organization. First of all, he/she should be very much clear in his/her perception towards the vision or mission of the organization. Accordingly he/she could formulate specific set of activities which should be understandable and clear to all in the organization. The distribution of responsibility should be even. It develops ownership among members and makes them reactive to both success and failure of their responsibility. Hierarchical life style has a negative effect; in fact, an impartial hierarchy in administrative set-up is necessary for better functioning of an organization.

## Negative consequences of being transparent

Increase of transparency is not a programme that can be implemented in an organization and the desired transparency achieved. Rather it is to be developed by some reformative steps adopted by all, starting from the initiator to a new entrant. If it is not achieved in totality. i.e. if one is not transparent to the other one, the very concept of transparency has got no meaning. Because one's transparency may provide sufficient ground for another self-motive oriented person to extract his point of benefit and in the case the former one gets victimized.

The negative consequences of lack of transparency will be an essay to mention. It is well felt in the present functioning of many NGOs. Lack of transparency is always destructive for an organization which causes dissociation in the human bond, the bond of life, affection, care and trust, finally bringing in clash in the ideology or values, which results in ill-functioning of an organization.

## 8. Other views

"Transparency in NGOs" is an important aspect to be looked after carefully. SDC's initiative in identifying and picking out such emerging and sensitive issues in NGO sector from time to time will be of great value to the NGOs.

Transparency is important today in organizations both Governmental and Non-governmental because of participation in management. Transparency should be in the areas of resources, and planning. It is all the more important today because participation is a concept which is being appreciated by the management as well as the workers. It also helps the employees to understand the aims and objectives of an organization. In this way it helps the employees to adjust their objectives and aspirations with those of the organization.

Transparency has got lots of advantages. However it also has some limitations. There may be certain individuals or groups in an organization who may be misusing transparency very subtly in order to achieve their own vested interests. This may lead to blocking the smooth running of the organization and the general welfare of employees.

## **1. Meaning**

Transparency literally means “to see through” which is pertaining to individuals, groups, communities, organizations, projects, programs, activities, implementation process, meetings at the management level, target groups, or beneficiaries and in general the systems i.e. administrative, financial etc. In other words, trying to involve people with openness in their own development. Transparency is also understood as being accountable and responsible to the various people, like the target groups, organizations, staff, community, government, society and to oneself.

## **2. Scope**

Broadly, it should be in areas of administration, management, finance, records, reports, etc. in day to day dealing of the NGOs functioning.

## **3. Need**

Transparency is required in the voluntary sector because it is dealing directly with human beings and providing services to them or is engaged in tackling crucial issues relevant to the targeted groups and areas. While dealing with people directly NGOs encounter several impediments which are to be tackled on day to day basis. There are many “doubts” about the functioning of the NGOs interventions in the field of development. Therefore, engaging the target groups in the process of project identification, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation becomes essential to enable generate mutual feelings of trust, belief and faith and also to establish a rapport with the people.

## **4. Actors**

Transparency is not limited to the voluntary sector, but involves a larger section of the society engaged in the development process. Accordingly the target groups, small voluntary agencies, community based organizations, government agencies, donor agencies, project holders and staff, in short all those involved in the process. These groups need to be accountable, responsible and transparent to each other and to the society at large.

## Reasons for non-transparency

Traditionally social work was based on charity and doling help to the poor and the needy. The rich created systems for their own gains and kept it alive for many centuries. In this situation the concept of transparency did not arise. Changing trends among the NGOs and social work becoming more professional, transparency was advocated and also practiced to some extent. Earlier the NGOs worked in isolation. Then, transparency was not a priority for consideration. The willingness to share with other organizations was not so important as the threat of stealing the ideas, strategy, approaches which was a common feature. Therefore project holders preferred to keep aloof.

## Actions for increasing transparency

Voluntary agencies are slowly accepting the changes and are preferring to work together in collectives to jointly deal with common issues effectively. NGOs are in a vulnerable state as people with ulterior motives are in a position to misuse and also take advantage of the situation being transparent.

There is a possibility of being criticized or distrusted by the community, target groups and other support agencies. There is hardly any scope for learning and improving in their functioning. The NGOs may not be accepted by the society in a situation where there is a lack of transparency.

## Other views

The concept of transparency among the voluntary sector needs to be propagated and encouraged through a massive campaign. This will help generate a culture which is healthy and readily acceptable to cope with the changing scenario among the voluntary sector. It will also help change attitudes among government functionaries and other support agencies and the society at large.

## **1. Meaning**

Transparency is all about good qualities and also the weaknesses present within a person/organisation. Transparency in organisations is about the ability of the top management to sit and discuss with their employees the strengths and weaknesses prevalent in the organisation.

## **2. Scope**

Transparency is an in-built mechanism to free the mind of fear and also make us aware of our strengths and weaknesses. Its scope in other words encompasses the whole personality of an individual.

## **3. Need**

As NGOs work in a socio-economic, political and cultural atmosphere there is a need to have a society that is free of exploitation and also a necessity to move towards making people more self-sufficient. Transparency in the light of all this becomes more urgent.

## **4. Actors**

Transparency according to me exists at two levels. One at the individual level and secondly at the group level. At the individual level, it becomes necessary for the individual to be transparent in his actions towards the top management and community at large. At the group level towards the social workers and the community at large.

## **5. Reasons for non-transparency**

Selfishness and cut-throat competition to beat each other are the important reasons for non-transparency.

## **6. Actions for increasing transparency**

By establishing close relationships with colleagues and evaluating one's own work and contributing to the organisation.

## 7. Possible negative consequences

The most serious negative consequence of transparency is it leads the NGO to a self-invited death.

## **MR MAHESHKAR A**

*Stree Aadhar Kendra*

In order to achieve the aims and objectives of the Organization in a more effective and result oriented manner, we need to be transparent i.e. Transparency means being open, clear and straight forward. The urge to be transparent should come from within the individual, the concept of transparency can be practiced among the staff i.e. the administrators-professionals, staff-para professionals, activists, sanghataks, village and grassroot workers. The client system and the Beneficiaries are to be transparent to the respective social worker and to the organization and vice-versa. Its not possible to be 100% transparent, but a fragment of it in a whole life can be attained. The concept of transparency is a very delicate issue but this should be conveyed properly at different levels. As we do believe in transparency, we practice this concept by training our personnel from time to time in the planning process.

1. Meaning

By the term transparency I understand 'thorough visibility'.

2. Scope

Transparency should be with regard to accounts, administration and communication.

3. Need

Accounts should be kept in such a way that it can be made available to anyone who wishes to have a closer look at it. It should be presented and passed at regular intervals in the appropriate form. Besides, those in charge of money matters should be ready to satisfactorily answer the queries or clarify the doubts pertaining to the transactions, at any time. Administrative structure and communication systems should be as open, simple and clear as possible. Both vertical and horizontal accountability and answerability should be ensured at every level.

4. Actors

Each one, however highly or lowly placed should be transparent to the other person. Individual's right to privacy should be safeguarded while dissuading him/her to be secretive in his/her dealings.

5. Reasons for non-transparency

Lack of transparency could be mainly due to the fear of being 'exposed'. People indulge in unwarranted transactions which, if brought to light, might tarnish the image of honesty and propriety they have been projecting.

6. Actions for increasing transparency

Internal and Social Audit could be made mandatory in monetary transactions and account keeping. So also, answerability and accountability of each one should be fixed leaving no room for ambiguity.

## 7. Possible negative consequences

Transparency could create opportunities for unwarranted criticisms and inferences. It could also endanger the much needed 'official secrecy' to some extent. However, by not being transparent, the institution or organization would run the risk of being managed in accordance with the whims and fancies of one person or a group of persons, giving occasions for high-handedness, red-tapism and corruption at various stages and levels.

### Meaning

The term transparency means that every thing is clearly seen, and that there are no secrets; everything is openly discussed, planned and decided. All are equally responsible. All are equal in all respects; one cannot take the decisions on his own, one has to respect the opinion of others. There is no groupism, regionalism, casteism and barriers or obstacles in the growth. There will be good understanding and relationships between groups/castes.

### Scope

Transparency should be in words, deeds, duties, responsibilities, decision making processes, changing structures, eliminating the evil forces, attacking the unjust social orders, to build responsible citizens and to develop good leadership.

### Need

Transparency is needed for progress, development, success; to narrow down the gap between 'haves' and 'have nots', to bring about social change, to empower the weak, poor, marginalised and down-trodden. It is needed for self-respect, mutual trust and to build good relationships , healthy societies; to improve the standard of life; to eradicate all social evils, and to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts.

### Actors

Each and every one should be transparent to the other. Mainly, people with whom we involve, interact and operate. One should be transparent not only to higher authorities; but also to colleagues and subordinates.

### Reasons for non-transparency

Because of lack of confidence, trust, self-esteem, contentment; honesty, integrity, loyalty and sincerity. There is no transparency because people are corrupt and do not follow ethical values.

## 6. Actions for increasing transparency

More confidence about the future should be created. People are to be properly and systematically educated to handle things in a more responsible way. Ethical value oriented education and training should be the focus. Power should be decentralized. Concentration of power, money, wealth should be avoided; justice should be for all. Participation should be at all levels in decision making process. Empowering of weaker sections should be given priority in the Development Strategy. Smaller groups and smaller egos must be encouraged.

## 7. Possible negative consequences

In the absence of transparency, subordinates will not give due respect to superiors.

There is a need for transparency, as it will result in a transformation among all communities throughout the country. The effect will then percolate to NGOs who are basically small groups or small structures, or small societies existing within the larger structures or societies of any nation.

## Meaning

"Transparency" means the good or the clear-cut feelings. It applies to the society, offices and the subordinates .

## Scope

Transparency should be in the respects of removing or avoiding anomalies from the minds of subordinates or in maintaining discipline in various ways.

## Need

Transparency is needed to maintain the curriculum or to avoid the anomalies from the society, so that one should not feel any draw backs or narrowness in their minds. By adopting transparency everyone should feel overjoyed in their status or standard of living etc.

## Reasons for non-transparency

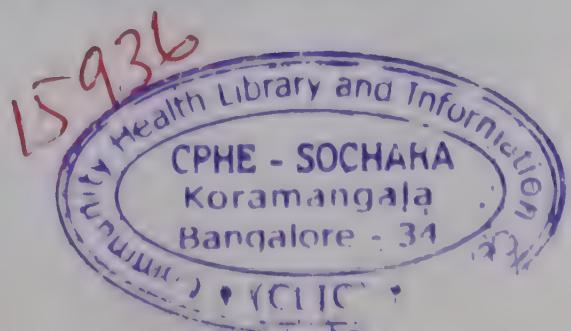
Most probably transparency is not there now in most of the organizations because the workers are money minded now a days. They always deal with money problems and they don't trust each other. So we do not find transparency to some extent.

## Actions for increasing transparency

Transparency can be increased if we don't differentiate among the workers. We should increase transparency if we need similarity and give more care to the office workers. Reduction or curtailment in money and wages should not be entertained.

## Possible negative consequences

The negative consequences of being transparent would show up if one feels superior in the organizations. The workers would be indisciplined. Lack of transparency could lead to negligence among workers in their work.



## 7. Other views

In NGOs transparency is essential. There should be good relationship between workers and the management. Workers should be helpful to each other. In relationships there should be control and discipline in office. The workers should be clear about their work. They should trust each other.

### Meaning

By Transparency we understand, seeing through the structure and functioning of any and every NGO. "Seeing through", "nakedness" with all its perfection and imperfections. Perhaps another term for it could be total openness.

### Scope

Ideally, it should be in all respects: the set-up or the structure: is there any extra constitutional authority dictating terms and conditions? Are we changing our visions and goals according to the visions and goals of the donors? Who takes decisions? How are decisions made? Why are they made the way they are made? In the functioning or the operations of the NGO there has to be transparency. Are responsibilities shared or ordered or handed out by the 'one on the top'?

Transparency has also to be in the collection, accumulation and the dissemination of funds.

In many NGOs, not even the annual audited accounts are circulated.

### Need

If we believe that the NGO is not like any other organization, that it is primarily a 'voluntary expression' and 'service' oriented organization; not highlighting hierarchy by equality, social justice and freedom then it has to take into confidence all its colleagues, not employees.

Transparency will also act like a watchdog- an internal watchdog system; it will introduce a checks and balances system. It will bring colleagues together as real partners, rather than hierarchical cogs in the NGO machinery.

### Actors

Needless to say the top has to be primarily transparent to the team. Transparency should start with and from the top. In this sense, once the role model acts, then the other team members will automatically follow.

## 5. Reasons for non-transparency

Basically because there is a lot to hide. The NGOs share all the faults and foibles of the larger society and the larger system. Wine, women, wealth, weaknesses are being hidden through the falsification of the concept and practice of 'confidentiality.'

## 6. Actions for increasing transparency

Everything practically possible. First, coax, cajole, convince. Impress upon NGOs convincingly the need to be transparent. Then try and twist their arms.

This can be done through the analysis of their audited accounts which could be made available through the Charity Commissioner's office. This should be done by organizations which would have funds for researches and studies. The research findings should then be circulated to the concerned NGOs for comment. If no sense comes through then call a group of friendly NGOs to the NGO concerned and try to talk.

If this also fails, then jointly decide what would be proper to do. A lot of public opinion should be created. Legal solutions are no solutions at all.

## 7. Possible negative consequences

The negative consequences of being transparent could be that the pangs and agony of being democratic in functioning would be experienced. Because there would be newer and fresher demands and insights. But then there is bound to be pain before something new is born.

About the lack of transparency, the negative consequences are there to be seen:

Isolated, insulated islands of NGOs sprouting everywhere..  
small kingdoms of NGOs being established everywhere..  
no accountability, except in furnishing a doctored balance sheet..  
no impact in terms of international, national, regional policies..  
this is inspite of the fact of the massive funds and personnel in the NGOs..  
doubts, suspicions and frustrations among the NGOs..  
people looking for an alternative world view among NGOs not finding it..  
the failure to build up a THIRD FORCE that would represent and voice the people's concern amidst the turmoil created by the PRINCE (that is the Establishment) and MERCHANT (the mercenaries those who control and get things done through money power).

## Meaning

The term 'Transparency' means that which can be seen very clearly. There will be no hazy picture. With regard to NGO it means 'Honesty'.

## Scope

Transparency should be maintained in all aspects related with public issue. Specially an NGO should maintain transparency.

## Need

When NGOs work with less rigidly than the government agencies and also with openness and spontaneity towards the public, their work will be owned by the people outside and they will also participate. If everything is very open before the public they will feel that it is their work and they will participate spontaneously. As an NGO is more mobile than Govt. agencies, they should have much clarity and 'Transparency' among themselves. Otherwise, it may be misunderstood both by the staff members, beneficiaries and also by the public.

## Actors

Total organizational set up, its procedure of work, specially accounting system should be very much disciplined and open to all members of the Society and project people. So the Chief Functionary and main body of the NGO should be transparent to the project people and all members associated with the NGO and Government Departments.

## Reasons for non-transparency

Transparency is not there now due to lack of clarity about the objective and activities of project work. Lack of commitment towards the work also plays an important role. Some of the NGOs do work only for publicity, they do not bother whether their work will bring any change in the society. Such type of NGOs do not have real commitment towards the society. In the NGO field lack of transparency can be seen among all classes of people like Intellectuals, Elites and Leaders of rural areas. A person who does not have any ideology or any values in his/her life can only stay without transparency.

## 6. Actions for increasing transparency

To increase transparency leaders of the NGO should follow an ideology. Staff members of the NGO should be properly trained. Leaders of the organization should follow discipline.

## 7. Possible negative consequences

- a) Sometimes, project people are not qualified enough to follow all matters. So transparency in respect of financial matters may misguide general people. They may not follow the real spirit.
- b) Lack of transparency makes the leaders hesitant. They do not work confidently.

## 8. Other views

Transparency is a relative term. There are few organizations who maintain real transparency. It is a reflection of the total society. When most of the systems of the society are full of corruption it is difficult to maintain transparency. When people involve themselves with NGOs or any other voluntary work where work is different he/she should follow an ideology while maintaining transparency. It is observed in present days that there are some persons who suddenly start an NGO without any vision. A person who has vision, clarity, ideology he/she will certainly maintain transparency.

Another factor which is very much relevant in the NGO world is that NGOs which are big in infrastructure get more preference at all levels. Efficiency and Capability are measured in terms of assets. Small NGOs therefore find it difficult to maintain transparency.

Transparency means opening up to possible extent about self, superiors, subordinates, friends, colleagues and organizations. Transparency should be there in the following aspects.

- a) Background of the organization
- b) Structure of the organization
- c) Budgeting, planning strategy and monitoring
- d) Staff-promotion, evaluation
- e) Loyalty and honesty for the work and the organization.

Transparency is needed for maintaining the credibility of the organization in the society and for self identity.

Each one should be transparent to each other in the following way:-

Organization - People

People - Organization

Top - Bottom

Bottom - Top

There is transparency because of personalities and systems of organization. Sometimes there is lack of transparency. Systems should be devised to understand each other. An open system can help in fostering transparency .

Lack of transparency will lead to:

- a) Difficulty in achieving the target.
- b) Hindrance of growth of people and organization.

1. Meaning

"Open and unambiguous property".

2. Scope

- 1) Equality
- 2) Evaluation systems
- 3) Loyalty
- 4) Working Environment
- 5) Role & Responsibility

3. Need

- 1) To ensure smooth running of the systems
- 2) To create team spirit
- 3) To have self enforced discipline

4. Actors

1) Individual	-	Organization
2) Top	-	Bottom
3) Senior	-	Junior

5. Reasons for non-transparency

- 1) Lack of systems
- 2) Personality clash and Ego
- 3) Discipline

6. Actions for increasing transparency

- 1) Identification of problems
- 2) Creating an environment of openness
- 3) Developing trust at all levels

7. Other views

Transparency should be there in all the activities of the NGOs to establish their credibility and in order to attain the mission and goal.

## Meaning

The word Transparency means the ability to be clearly seen through.

## Scope

Transparency should exist at the conceptual, ideological and operation levels.

## Need

Transparency is needed to achieve the NGO's ultimate goal i.e. to transform the exploitative order of the socio-economic & cultural milieu into a just society.

## Actors

NGO leaders and workers should be transparent to people, government, donors and to the staff.

## Reasons for non-transparency

Most of the NGOs are becoming project oriented. To formulate a project, submit it to the donors and have money for the organizational set-up has been the philosophy of most of the NGOs.

## Actions for increasing transparency

From the NGO's point of view, if transparency is to be increased, thrust should be given to people, instead of NGOs alone being empowered. If the people are aware of the financial condition, the scope from the end of NGOs for accountability is enhanced which facilitates transparency in the NGOs.

Transparency does not pertain only to accounts, but also to the roles and boundaries of the staff and function of the NGOs. Management should initiate measures to fortify transparency in the NGOs with a shared leadership.

## Possible negative consequences

- i) Peoples participation remains absent.
- ii) Malpractices take place in case of functioning.

iii) Loss of credibility to the people, government and the donors.

iv) NGOs are being victimized into project traps.

## 8. Other views.

NGOs are more prone to lip service, rhetoric and psycho-pathic hosanna by using their jargons in reports based on theoretical models. Therefore, care should be taken to combine theory and practice together to have a pragmatic approach and synergic effects in the area of development.

### Meaning

We feel that the term 'Transparency' would mean that any dealing or working of an NGO or Government should be fool-proof, without giving room for any misunderstanding/comments.

### Scope

Transparency should be in all respects in the working of an NGO or Government.

### Need

Due to the present day situations like scandals in politics, transparency is very much needed.

### Actors

All working and dealings of an NGO or Government should be transparent and answerable to the general public.

### Reasons for non-transparency

Because of not realizing the importance of transparency and the old practice of not making everything we do known to others.

### Actions for increasing transparency

Every individual including those at the NGO and at the Government level should be held answerable to the general public for any act he/she/NGO/Government does.

### Possible negative consequences

Non-cooperation and misunderstanding affecting the total development.

### Other views

All working/dealings of NGOs should be transparent and fool-proof, to avoid any criticism either from the general public or the Government.

**1. Meaning & Scope**

No secrets with regard to the organizational activities, decisions being taken by the management, financial statements of inflow/outflow.

**2. Need**

Without it, many a time “left hand does not know what the right hand is doing” within the organization. Sharing the experiences is always an enriching learning process within the organization and among the fellow NGOs.

**3. Actors**

Particularly the board/policy making group must take decisions first of all in participative manner with their staff members. The desirable environment within the organization should not only be informal but encourage communication among the staff as often as possible.

**4. Reasons for non-transparency**

Mostly due to vertical/hierarchical organizational set up.

**5. Actions for increasing transparency**

Emphasize in all the seminars the need to create a culture of transparency within the organizations. Voluntary agencies network also to be formed/encouraged for increasing the communication/sharing of experiences. Also each Voluntary Organization should bring out their annual report/document on their work experiences and their finance flow and share it with all those interested.

**6. Possible negative consequences**

The possible negative consequences can be criticism. Lack of transparency naturally creates suspicion, doubts among the staff and other voluntary organizations.

**7. Other views**

Transparency is an important requisite and should be insisted upon in all the meetings.

By transparency we mean flowing of upto date data on internal and external organizational affairs, structure, systems, approaches, input and output, vision and mission etc. from one side to the other side without having deviation and communication gap.

Transparency in NGOs can be classified into 3 different ways.

1. Transparency within the NGO:

This kind of flow can be from the chief functionary to the individual beneficiary and from individual beneficiary to the chief functionary.

2. Transparency among NGOs:

This kind of flow can be between two or more NGOs together at different levels.

3. Transparency by Mediator:

Transparency can be between NGO or NGOs to the Mediator Agency. Here the mediator has the role of introducing transparency flow to the party NGOs.

MERITS:

Transparency is in many ways helpful.

1. It develops skill and efficiency.
2. Clear way or vision can be achieved.
3. Errors can be reduced.
4. Input and output mechanisms can be cleared.
5. Competency can be increased.

LIMITATIONS.

1. Possibility for black mailing and threats to existence.
2. There is a 'risk factor' and a responsible 'leadership' which cannot surrender to transparency.
3. When organizations face major crises, transparency creates problems.
4. Transparency leads to loss of hope in voluntary service and initiative.
5. It creates unhealthy competitions.

**1. Meaning**

One should know the aims and objectives, as well as core activities of the organization.

**2. Scope**

In respect of optimum utilization of funds for achievement of goals.

**3. Need**

Transparency is very much vital and a live issue for an NGO because without these we would not be able to attract best people and resources from reputed organizations.

**4. Actors**

Organization should be transparent to the people who are funding.

**5. Reasons for non-transparency**

Presently lack of transparency if at all exists, may be due to the lack of interest in the activities of the organization. Staff work more as wage earners and there is no sense of belonging.

**6. Actions for increasing transparency**

There should be more of employees' participation in the management of the organization.

**7. Possible negative consequences**

I don't see any negative consequences for a transparent NGO organization. Lack of transparency, may result in total blockage of resource-mobilisation from the public.

I feel the meaning of the word "Transparency" is openness. It is difficult to find this quality in the present world.

Transparency is one of the main factors which is needed genuinely to win in any race or contest in our lives. However, there is a limit in transparent attitude in the materialistic world.

In my opinion, a person should be transparent in the following areas:

- a) relation between employer and employees, employer and society and employee and beneficiaries.
- b) in inter-personal relationships
- c) accounting and finance

If transparency exists between employer and employee then the employer can expect cent percent dedication from the employees. The employee will be willing to do everything for the employer.

The success of transparency is the triumph of a nation which means everyone not only thinks of himself but also thinks of the development of the society. If people are transparently sincere, they can have good inter-personal relationship with others.

In accounting and financial details every relevant person should be transparent to his employer and the society. Every person should be transparent to each other.

Presently, one can't see transparency everywhere because people are (except very few) thinking / worrying about themselves only i.e. for the sake of their benefit. Moreover, people are greedy, jealous, egocentric and self-centered. Human beings should be broad-minded, sympathetic, empathetic and good listeners. Everybody should be transparent but few can't become totally transparent.

For NGOs, it is very important for everyone to come under one umbrella.

**MR SHYAM SUNDAR DAS**  
*Committee For Legal Aid to Poor*

**1. Meaning**

Transparency is not “pardarshatha” in Oriya. The Oriya meaning of the hindu term is skill. However, transparency can ensure skill by eliminating the mess we make in our organizations. It can, therefore, contribute to OD or OR. In Oriya, transparency means clarity . A penetrating clarity is essential for efficiency and effectiveness.

**2. Scope**

Vision and Mission of the organization. The aims and objectives followed should be as per the Memorandum of Association of the organization. A thirdly these may be compared to the purposes of the Act under which the Society was registered. Secondly the contractual obligations of the society to those who funded it or donated resources should be considered. Accounts keeping submission of reports and returns etc., functionally may be the concern of transparency of the organization. These things will most assuredly contribute to OD/OR.

**3. Need**

For ensuring quality, efficiency and effectiveness. Transparency can promote OD/OR by putting the Human Resources of the organization on the right track.

**4. Actors**

In all mutual relationships the decision makers should be transparent to those who will be affected by their decisions. Law is considered good when it is predictable. Transparency as a process of the Law of Communication and mutual relationship must be predictable for each of the partners towards the other.

**5. Reasons for non-transparency**

Probably the organizations are not clear about their obligations/duties to those with whom they interact or establish mutual relationship. They think that things are transparent the other party may misuse the information that they have to part. It may be self-incriminatory. While we have the Fundamental rights in India not to be compelled to be a witness against oneself [Art-20(3)] yet there may be situations where one will be compelled to be a witness.

against oneself if he becomes transparent. There is no adequate awareness that information handed over in the interest of transparency for mutual benefit should not be used against the informer or to his detriment. How far it is illegal and an offense is also not fully appreciated. The information obtained through transparency is usually one-sided like a funding agency obtaining the information from the applicant grantee while itself not being equally transparent. In such cases the knowledge of one party is enriched by the other party. It is therefore, a clandestine pilferage of the information base that is a source of power. Similar other psychological situations or understanding as well as misunderstanding may prompt organizations to be privy, as far as possible, rather than be transparent, when a mutuality in transparency is not available.

### Actions for increasing transparency

To increase transparency the mutual aspect should be emphasized. Similarly, the Legal implications and limitations should be made explicit to each other. Besides this, transparency as a skill must remodel various organizational work, procedures particularly in relation to accounts, correspondence, filing, documentation, reporting, auditing, monitoring and evaluation etc. It, is therefore, a question of office management and administration with or without the use of scientific techniques and modern technologies like computers, electronic gadgets and training of the staff in the revised system.

### Possible negative consequences

Lack of transparency may result in inefficiency and ineffectiveness. Therefore, one should be transparent to Oneself. Organization policies of transparency may be decided upon so far as its relationship to its governing body, general body, donors and funders, employees and volunteers are concerned. It is a process of education for the organization with the objective of ensuring the greatest possible clarity and effectiveness. Yet one should be conscious to note that this policy in the organization itself may be framed by one individual or by a core group and therefore, it may be subjective instead of being objective. It is, here, that a change of attitude alone can bring about more effective organizational renewal or development.

### Other views

Among the NGOs there is forced transparency inflicted upon them by the donors and possible funding agencies. Particularly the government agencies are notorious in this field by claiming a good deal of paper work in the name of transparency. It makes the NGO spend in money, human resources, services and time and when unsuccessful it wastes all the efforts invested by the NGOs.

This type of wasting of human resources along with the frittering away of little funds that they could gather for investment is never compensated. Sometimes it results in corrupt practices and even making the NGO blacklisted. There is no attempt yet to challenge the authority of those who abuse their position and humiliate NGOs by backlisting them or circulating confidential opinion among other Funding Agencies at their back. From these points of view transparency is tyranny, the victims of which are NGOs. The perpetrators of such tyranny go scot free, relegating the rights of natural justice and Human Right Declarations as well as the Legal Provisions to the abysmal darkness of invisible anonymity.

Transparency can be conceived as a pleasure of making the other person nude, bereft of all his clothing. It reminds us of the pictures of Draupadi in the hands of Dushasan or Padmini who was forced to appear before the glass reflecting her beauty to Aladdin Khilji. One sided transparency taken to such extremity is a bane on our civilization. It should be replaced by more loving, enduring, psychological management of the other partners if it is absolutely necessary. The key word of TRANSPARENCY is mutual confidence.

### **Meaning**

Transparency is the approach of understanding one another frankly and truly ie., nothing to be hidden from top to bottom. In otherwords the approach and behaviour of each person should be free and frank in talking and working. If we are transparent we can avoid tension and discrimination.

### **Scope**

Transparency should be in every aspect from top to bottom and bottom to top (i.e. according to the NGO the beneficiaries and the managing directors should be transparent).

### **Need**

If we have transparency there will be a calm and quiet atmosphere devoid of any misuse of any articles or money. The institution will get fame and support of people.

### **Actors**

Both the beneficiaries and the NGO should be transparent.

### **Reasons for non-transparency**

Now a days there is no transparency, because every one wants to be a VIP and wishes to cheat somebody else. According to an NGO, the administrators of the organization wish to get something from the work. At the same time the beneficiaries wish to cheat the NGO by giving wrong information, they also wish to get assistance from some where else, therefore beneficiaries resort to wrong ways. Even in the Government Cell (Funding) there is no transparency, no equality, and so someone who is able to canvas, will be able to get funds.

### **Actions for increasing transparency**

To increase transparency each person of an NGO should be a real social worker, nothing should be hidden from the public, and only then will the public support NGOs.

We can understand transparency by this example:

If an NGO is assigned the job of disbursement of some benefits in 10 families  
The following should be the procedure.

- i) The whole purpose should be known to the client, donor and the NGO workers who will do the ultimate job.
- ii) There should be a committee comprising of a community member and the NGOs worker to implement the work.
- iii) The beneficiaries should be selected by the prescribed criteria known to everyone.
- iv) There should be proper records for scrutinizing of the beneficiaries.
- v) There should be proper written system for disbursement of benefits.
- vi) There should be prescribed receipts and a detailed information format which has to be signed by more than one person of the committee and individuals.
- vii) All involved must be clear about the related matter.
- viii) Decision should be data based and more people should be involved in taking decisions so that a democratic pattern can be followed.
- ix) NGOs should have segregation of duties for every work so that an individual understands the responsibility and performs accordingly.

Transparency is needed for any public work. The NGO should be transparent to the client (i.e. Donor & Recipient) and to its own staff/employees who are involved in the process.

Continued efforts towards transparency can bring real transparency.

There are no negative consequences of being transparent.

Mistrust and misunderstanding can be developed due to lack of transparency.

Transparency gives a clear image to the NGO who possesses it.

### Meaning

The term Transparency is intertwined with the concept of accountability. The term can be very simply explained. Anybody, institution or organization dealing either with public money or with issues that are of public nature has to be accountable in the court of law and accountable to the citizens. This can be done by doing away with secrecy in their financial transactions as well as their day to day activities.

### Scope

Transparency should not only be maintained in matters of financial nature but also in the day to day functioning of an NGO.

### Need

In a democracy every organization spending public money is answerable to the ultimate authority, i.e., the people. At the practice level we see that of late a lot of NGOs are being accused of many acts of omission and commission, the accusations are of the nature ranging from financial bungling to sexual harassment of the people by the workers of the NGOs. While in many cases the machinations of the erstwhile privileged class, whose vested interests have been threatened by the NGOs cannot be denied, there is some element of truth behind some of these accusations thus bringing disrepute to the entire sector.

### Actors

Any Body, Institution or Organization dealing either with public money or with issues that are of public nature, irrespective of the body being either a NGO or the Bureaucracy or the entire Governmental structure has to be transparent. The question of transparency to whom? does not arise at all because an organization is transparent only when any one willing to see or know anything about the organization is not held back from obtaining the desired information.

### Reasons for non-transparency

Lack of transparency is due to a variety of factors, the first of them being the attitude of the VOs towards this. Despite their supposed adherence to

development of the weaker and underprivileged sections of the society some of the NGOs are concerned with nothing but their own development.

## 6. Actions to increase transparency

To bring about transparency in public affairs we definitely are in need of an Act or Law in a codified form. We cannot sweep this issue under the carpet by the standard argument that there are various laws which are dead letters. Before such a law is available to us the NGOs should set themselves as models of emulation by making open all their documents: financial and otherwise, for public scrutiny. We can also conceive the idea of a national network of all the NGOs. This network should prepare a code of conduct stressing upon the issue of transparency and boycott/blacklist any NGO which does not fall on line. Our organization which is linked to such a National network called SAMPDA has prepared such a code of conduct .

## 7. Possible negative consequences

The only negative consequence of transparency would be that we will have to work a bit harder to provide information to people seeking it. But this is the amount we have to pay to bring back decency and sanity in this sector.

## 1. Meaning

Transparency means being open - where the objectives of the organization are clear and well known to the employees and to other organizations.

## 2. Scope

Transparency should be seen in strengths, and even in weaknesses. The management should recognise them as weaknesses and be willing to take steps to change them. The type of policies adopted by the NGO and the services provided by them should be well known to the village community.

## 3. Need

Transparency is needed in these areas firstly to increase the utilization of the services by the community and secondly weaknesses would help the organization to continuously change its intervention programmes and even policies.

## 4. Actors

The Management or the Organization should be transparent to the employees; the community; other NGOs and Government organizations.

## 5. Reasons for non-transparency

Due to apprehensions of the management about unionization of employees and the possibility of efficient management of expanding activities, it is difficult to be transparent.

## 6. Actions for increasing transparency

To increase transparency, there should be a uniform recruitment, increment and benefit policy for all employees. The management should be clear about expansion and growth of the NGO and develop a vision for the future.

## **7. Possible negative consequences**

The negative aspects of transparency are that the organization becomes vulnerable and prone to demands from the employees and the community. This may become difficult to handle on a day to day basis and instead of reacting positively, the employees can form a union which the NGO sector really fears. Sometimes too much transparency can misfire and lead to personnel and administrative complications rather than achievement of goals.

On the other hand, lack of transparency can lead to dissatisfaction among the employees and the community with poor image of trust.

## **8. Other views**

Transparency in the NGOs should be present at the policy level for the employees and the services offered by the NGOs should be well known and utilized by the community. However extreme transparency is difficult to handle at the administrative level.

## **MR SUNIL KUMAR MISRA**

*Ganeswar Club*

### **1. Meaning**

Transparency means open in all respects. Nothing to keep as secret to anybody or any situation or surroundings.

### **2. Scope**

Transparency in action and financial openness to the people and public.

### **3. Need**

Transparency is needed to tell others what we are, where we are and what we would like to be.

### **4. Actors**

Each and everybody in a group or outside the group should be clean and clear in every respect. It should function from top to bottom and vice versa.

### **5. Reasons for non-transparency**

Some where self interest/some where the personality.. Some where the prevailing surroundings or situation force transparency to be limited. But in a few places still it is prevailing. Lack of security of basic needs and also the non-existence of a personality of dedication and commitment.

### **6. Possible negative consequences**

Each and everybody must be clean in mind to accept transparency in a positive way otherwise there is every possibility of loss of aim and objectives and will emerge along with the corrupt practice of present politics or bureaucratic processes.

### **7. Other views**

Let the selected persons to be involved first show light to other individuals and NGOs. If a scope is given within a limited sphere then testing schedules can be prepared to spread the value of transparency.

## **MR SURESH S KHADE**

*Deepalaya*

Transparency is the process of clear communication from top to bottom and bottom to top. It is a medium to communicate our ideas and thoughts from top to bottom.

The following should be transparent:

- a. Top management to grass root worker
- b. Field worker to beneficiaries and vice versa
- c. Beneficiaries/community to top management
- d. Community people to grassroots worker.

Transparency is needed because we are co-related with each other.

Transparency is absent because of language problems, ego, selfishness, personal problems, interpersonal-relation, misunderstanding, perception and fear of job insecurity.

Transparency is needed to improve interpersonal relations, to develop trust and improve communication .

If Transparency is lacking development work will suffer; money, time, material and manpower will be lost. Community people will lose trust and faith in the organization.

Transparency should be communicated through easy language without any partiality.

## 1. Meaning

Transparency is openness.

## 2. Scope

Transparency should be in all respects. Specially in respect of financial management.

## 3. Need

Transparency is needed in financial management without which the management/authority cannot demand honesty from its workers/subordinates. If the management/authority hides the truth on its level, automatically the workers/subordinates will be dishonest as a result of which the whole organization will be blamed.

## 4. Actors

The management/authority should be transparent to its workers/subordinates. The workers/subordinates should be transparent to the people/beneficiaries. It is most important on the part of management/authority itself to be transparent to the people/beneficiaries as a result of which the workers/subordinates will have no chance to hide the truth before the people/beneficiaries. If at all they do so, their place will be no-where.

## 5. Reasons for non-transparency

It is so because the management/authority has some illegal motive. The management/authority wants to divert funds from one head to another for which it hides the truth from its workers/subordinates as a result of which people/beneficiaries are in dark about financial management. If the people/beneficiaries are in dark about financial management, they may be end-users but not the participants by which their sense of belongingness cannot be created.

## **6. Actions for increasing transparency**

Transparency cannot be either increased or decreased. Truth is always true and false is always false. But half truth is more dangerous than falsehood. The level of transparency depends upon the nature of the management/authority. Management/authority may be either self-centered or self-less. If the management is self-centered in nature the organization can never be transparent. If the top management shows transparency in some work it is only to influence the people/beneficiaries. Like half truth that is more dangerous. In order to increase transparency the management/authority should change its nature from self-centeredness to selflessness.

## **7. Possible negative consequences**

There are no negative consequences of being transparent. The sky is always blue. Sometimes cloud and smoke blacken the blue sky. When they are removed, the sky remains blue. Similarly if the NGO is for the people, there is no possibility of any negative consequences of being transparent though sometimes wrong-understanding may create problems. It must be automatically removed and the transparent NGO will be more purified. Similarly lack of transparency may help to create assets either for the individuals or for the organization for enjoyment of life, but it will positively lose the trust of the people/beneficiaries. Similarly it depends upon the nature of the management/authority whether to create assets either for self or for the organization for enjoyment of life, by lack of transparency or to earn trust of the people by transparency in all its activities specially on financial management.

## **8. Other views**

"Transparency in NGOs" can remain on paper, debate and discussions only if "social audit system" is not adopted by the NGOs in their financial managements. What is social audit system? First of all, the annual reports and the general audited accounts of the NGO should be available to the general public. The NGO should distribute such reports free to the Head of the Local administration and Panchayat Raj Institutions. At the time of implementation of any project the NGO should inform the beneficiaries the sanctioned budget by calling a general meeting of the beneficiaries just after getting the sanction letter of a project. In that meeting a Project Implementation Committee should be formed from among the beneficiaries in which the representatives of the local administration and PRIs should also be taken as members. All expenditure incurred by the organization from the project cost must exclude from the administrative cost, the vouchers should be countersigned by the members of the PIC. Any alterations should be first suggested by the

members of the PIC. At regular intervals the general meetings of the entire beneficiaries should be called to review the progress of the project including financial implications and periodical audit of the accounts. After completion of the project again the general meeting of the beneficiaries should also be conducted to audit the accounts of the project. This procedure should be followed in respect of mass-benefit activities. But in case of individual benefit activities where formation of PIC from among the beneficiaries is not possible or monitoring purposes, in those cases the beneficiaries should do their own work under the supervision of the field worker/supervisor which should be monitored by the concerned co-ordinator of the project. The proper receipts regarding the expenditure of the work should be collected from the beneficiaries themselves. The organization should introduce the method of monitoring system by writing letters to the beneficiaries from its office regarding the amount expended for the activity and its use etc., with a reply card to inform the organization if they have any complaints. This system will not only help the organization to monitor the work from its office but also help them to have a scope to monitor the work of the organization. All these methods of work will make the organization win the heart of the people who can see the organization with a different view for its transparency and social audit system.

## **MR. TAPAN CHOUDHARY**

*Deepalaya*

### **1) Meaning**

The term 'transparency' in NGOs means that there should be clarity on go vision and mission of the organization among the staff members and its cli and good inter-personal relationship between staff and the management:

### **2) Scope**

Transparency should be in respect of planning, implementation, policy utilization of funds.

### **3) Need**

Transparency is needed to work effectively. It helps to achieve credibility wh leads to raise more and more funds for the organization.

### **4) Actors**

One should be transparent to the staff. The organization should be transparent to the CEO/clients and the CEO to the organization.

### **5) Reasons for non-transparency**

I feel there is transparency to a great extent.

### **6) Actions for increasing transparency**

It can be increased through positive interaction, strengthening relationships and by providing constructive feed back.

### **7) Possible negative consequences**

I do not see any negative consequences of being transparent. Lack of transparency leads to confusion, mistrust, misunderstanding and conflict.

### **8) Other views**

Transparent organizations can be examples for other NGOs which will change the environment of the NGO world.

The term 'transparency' means no 'under cover transactions, deals or actions'. Open for all to see and examine', 'Clearly seen through', 'Without any disguise or mask' and 'Clarity in operations vis-a-vis the organization's raison d'etre (reason for being or vision)'.

'Transparency' is a value laden term and has inherent relationship to the concepts of 'participation', 'democracy', 'accountability' and 'decentralization'. One may also expand the meaning of the term to use it interchangeably with the above concepts. The question of transparency comes up primarily in the context of organizational management, there cannot be a decentralized, participative management system without the report transparency. It is one of the most important criteria for qualifying an efficient and effective management system on lines of the popular paradigms of management.

areas

Transparency is required at all levels and areas of organizational management. However, priority areas where absolute transparency is called for are:

Vision - evolving, development and clarification of the vision of the organization

Management of resources especially, financial and material

Decisions and practice of organizational transformation (OR and OD) exercises

HRD policies regarding recruitment, selection, promotion, remuneration (pay scales and incentives like increment) and performance appraisal of personnel

Decision making processes

The key to success in any form of organization is the feeling of 'ownership' among the members (staff). Feeling of ownership enhances motivation and the quality of participation among the staff. The 'owner' has the right to know what is happening there, how, why and by whom. Process transparency

organizations helps in speeding up its operations, reduces confusions, and avoids duplications and role conflicts among the staff.

Ideally, the real 'stakeholder' in a development organization, or the beneficiary constituency has the right to know the resources and processes involved carrying out the programs.

Credibility is the vital stake of any organization. To establish credibility with the beneficiaries/customers, the general public and agencies conferring legitimacy, transparency in management of resources, procedures, systems and results is necessary. Lines of accountability is essential. It is especially so for organizations that make use of, manage and administer public resources and services.

## Actors

At the intra-organizational level, transparency is expected at all levels of vertical and horizontal differentiation in the organizational structure. Transparency should flow from the top (apex) level directors/executives to middle level managers to the section/unit and administration staff at the operator level. There should not be any 'gap' at any of these levels and room for obscurity, suspicion and distrust.

At the inter-organizational level, each organization as a microcosm or individual unit should assume the responsibility of institutionalizing systems and procedures by which it can be transparent and/or accountable to the macrocosm or the fraternity/community of organizations at large and providers of resource (donors) and legitimacy (government).

At the operational level, each organization as a single unit is expected to be transparent to the beneficiary partners. Care should be taken to reflect transparency in all possible respects to the society at large.

## Why is transparency non-existent today?

- a. Organizations tend to maintain only "upward" lines of accountability and totally neglect "downward" accountability.
- b. Rigid and too complex structures within organizations leave too many gaps that permit obscurity, secretiveness and disguise.
- c. Most of the organizations do not have decentralized, participatory management systems which ensure transparency.

- d. Vested interests and corruption are rampant in the voluntary sector which prevent organizations from being transparent and accountable.
- e. Lack of professionalism among 'professionals' and 'professional organizations' make room for ego clashes and tendency to have rivalries. As a result, individual professionals and organizations become more secretive and adopt styles and systems of functioning.
- f. Unhealthy competition among organizations arising out of the thirst for 'empire building' also is a reason for many organizations for not being transparent.
- g. Feelings of insecurity and threat to existence at the intra and inter-organizational levels drive professionals and organizations to the corridors of corruption, malpractice and rigidity which prevent them from being transparent. Many organizations feel that the donors may withdraw their support if they present themselves as they are. Some fear the relegation of their credibility as a result of being transparent to the society.

#### Actions for increasing transparency

- a. Systems and procedures can be devised within the organizational structure for facilitating transparency within and between organizations. For example
  - \* introducing a participatory management system
  - \* standardization of procedures such as reporting
  - \* regular group sessions for sharing of experiences
  - \* creating easy access to information among staff at all levels
  - \* participatory performance appraisal at all levels
  - \* devise control mechanisms like formation of ad hoc supervisory/monitoring committees with representatives from different operational levels.
- b. Transparency among NGOs can be increased by devising systems for dissemination of information about individual organizations. For example, bi-annual or annual bulletins giving details of activities, systems, management styles etc. can be published for the reference of other organizations.
- c. Annual audit (financial) reports of organizations can be published for circulation among the NGO circle.
- d. Transparency among organizations can be enhanced a great deal through networking.

e. One can also think of extreme steps like social auditing of NGOs.

## Negative consequences

Lack of transparency in NGOs may lead to various problems at the intra and inter-organizational, operational and macro levels. Some of them are:

### (i) Intra-organizational level:

- \* Staff becomes alienated from the vision and mission of the organization
- \* Create gaps between different levels of management and operation
- Intra-organizational level staff become suspicious about the intentions and strategies of the upper levels of management
- \* Create mistrust among operational staff towards functionaries at managerial levels
- \* Dependency of operational staff on the middle and upper level management as they become reluctant to take initiatives.
- \* Lack of feeling of ownership and low motivation among middle level management and operational staff
- \* Lack of clarity in perception of problems, alternatives and strategies at different levels
- \* Operations become time consuming because of rigid channels of communication
- \* Introduction of changes become time consuming as the staff take long to understand and get accustomed to changes.

### (b) Inter-Organizational level:

- \* Duplication of roles (services) results in poor utilization of resources
- \* Lead to suspicion, backbiting and rivalries among NGOs
- \* Encourage the tendency towards character organization

- Suspicion and lack of information due to lack of transparency will lead to poor networking.
- Unhealthy competition and lack of willingness to support each other and share resources among NGOs lead to dilution of the common cause of development.
- NGO rivalries arising out of lack of information, suspicion etc. due to lack of transparency will damage the image of the voluntary sector and drive away potential donors and collaborators from the corporate sector.

(c) Operational level:

- The beneficiaries may lose trust and become suspicious of the intentions and strategies of development organizations
- Lead to low beneficiary participation in development programs
- The beneficiaries may develop unrealistic expectations from organizations
- Duplication of services offered by different organizations due to lack of transparency will encourage the beneficiaries to misuse available services.

(d) Macro level:

- Damage the image of development organizations among the general public people may lose trust in philanthropy
- The lack of information about the objectives and strategies of development programs may help reinforcing the belief among the general public that NGOs are merely agents of charity.

## 1. Meaning

The oxford dictionary defines the term transparency in the following way :

"That which can be clearly seen through allowing light to pass through without diffusion."

First of all a transparent thing should be clearly seen through-in this way transparency is a quality that every person and groups of persons should have. This is a much needed quality that the people in authority should have.

## 2. Scope

Transparency should be in all aspects of life. Transparency is a necessary quality in public life.

## 3. Need

Transparency is needed in all aspects of life especially in public life because it will help us lead a clear and honest life with public support.

## 4. Actors

Transparency should be among the people of the society.

## 5. Reasons for non-transparency

It is not right to say that there is no transparency now. It is only that in some aspects of life there is not enough transparency. The lack of transparency due to the people's ego and the lack of understanding of others' capabilities.

## 6. Actions for increasing transparency

In order to increase the level of transparency one should shed egos and should accept and understand others' capabilities. One should have respect for individual personalities irrespective of his or her economic, and social status.

## Other views

NGOs play a great role in development of the society. Transparency is the basis of democracy. And democracy is based on the assumption of equal rights and brotherhood of all.

As NGOs have got a great role to play in setting up a democratic society they should be transparent.

**1. Meaning**

Transparency means that all the transactions involved by the official or agency be made public and is accessible to all concerned persons.

**2. Scope**

Transparency should be in respect of (a) planning the programme, (b) collecting and disseminating information, (c) financial transactions, and, (d) execution of the programme including inputs and outputs, distribution of perks etc., the functionaries.

**3. Need**

Transparency creates confidence in those collaborating with and executing the programs, and earns goodwill necessary to execute programmes successfully. This removes doubts and suspicions of the people concerned and minimizes jealousy and rivalry in the executions.

**4. Actors**

Transactions should be transparent i.e. nothing should be kept secret from the relevant and concerned person.

**5. Reasons for non-transparency**

Lack of transparency is usually interpreted as dishonesty in transaction. It is avoided sometimes because of unnecessary and mischievous interpretation and misunderstanding between various functionaries.

**6. Actions for increasing transparency**

Transparency can be increased by briefing the concerned persons about planning and execution of the programs, funds received and spent, nature of assignment and persons executing these assignments with reasons for beneficiaries of the programs and process of execution and sources of funds etc.

All the documents related to funds and its expenditure should be accessible to the people concerned to avoid misunderstandings.

## 7. Possible negative consequences

Lack of transparency may create conflict, and lower the morale and cause litigation etc.

Transparency, on the other hand, may create heart-burning and rivalry between people getting advantages and those deprived of it, as the rationale behind these, unless well debated, may fall prey to misinterpretation and misunderstanding.

I think transparency should be there.

## **DR USHA BAMBRWALE**

*'Streevani'*

### **1. Meaning**

Be an openbook.

### **2. Scope**

No secrets for gains.

### **3. Need**

To reduce corruption.

### **4. Actors**

All those who deal with each other should be transparent.

### **5. Actions for increasing transparency**

Prefer merit to nepotism and corruption.

### **6. Possible negative consequences**

If NGOs are transparent, probably they will steal each others' projects.

### **7. Other views**

Transparency will lead to better interaction and networking .

Meaning

Honest and crystal clear dealings in every transaction.

'Transparency' should be in what respect?

In every respect for an NGO.

Need

A NGO is dealing with public funds meant for specific causes.

Actors

The organization should be transparent to the public.

Reasons for non-transparency

It is very much there.

Actions for increasing transparency

Effective implementation of innovative systems and procedures.

Possible negative consequences

In being transparent there is hardly any negative consequence. Lack of transparency will hamper the growth of the organization.

Other views

A NGO has to be very transparent mainly in financial dealings as these funds are meant for the needy and is public property. An NGO is a facilitator to the community. Being transparent enhances the credibility of the NGO and the people who are under their care develop faith and confidence.

**MR VIJAYARAMAN A**  
*Seva Nilayam Society*

**1. Meaning**

Transparency is allowing information to pass freely everywhere, and not be secretive.

**2. Scope**

While we are talking about transparency there should not be restriction in any respect.

**3. Need**

Considering global changes and communication networks NGOs are no secret agencies. Its aim is to develop the people. Transparency is one of the management techniques to make people aware of what is going on in any institution and make them participate voluntarily in every programme. Transparency is very essential for positive development of any organization.

**4. Actors**

Both providers and receivers should be transparent, particularly management to staff, and management to beneficiaries and staff to staff and staff to beneficiaries etc.

**5. Reasons for non-transparency**

There is a fear among the management that either employees or beneficiaries are not supposed to know what is going on in the institution because they want to be a power center for ever and hold their position permanently. Most of the time people are aware about the NGOs and their activities and they are closely watching and are demanding to know what is going on. Now people think that the NGOs survive because of them. Most of the top management are not professionals. They practice traditional management which leads to lot of complexities in modern times.

**6 Actions for increasing transparency**

Vision and mission studies have to be planned for the top management. Regular staff meetings and planning with staff and reviewing programs

every level would increase transparency. Even the budget should be discussed in the peoples organization forum. Regular training programmes for the top level managers are also essential to understand the purpose of transparency in NGOs.

### Possible negative consequences

With regard to the negative consequences of being transparent, initially conflicts may arise in the administration whereas when there is no transparency, peoples participation may be absent.

**MR WAKHLU ON**  
*Pragati Foundation*

**1. Meaning**

Easily seen through, evident, e.g. transparent, sincerity free from disguise  
“Transparency” in the context of organization function means over all  
**INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY** in respect of the following:

- a) Absence of hidden agendas.
- b) Not keeping back any information from the members of Executive Committee or the General Body.
- c) Making available to all, the statutory statement of accounts and balance sheet etc. duly signed by selected auditors.
- d) Holding elections as per the constitution/MOU of the NGO.
- e) Doing everything in accordance with the NGO constitution and the law of the land.
- f) Contributing to the work of NGO without malice or personal motive.
- g) Acknowledgment of everyone's work properly.

**2. Scope**

Transparency should be achieved in respect of all activities:

Minutes of meetings, money matters, contact with funding & aid agencies and progress thereof, election of governing/executive committee; participation by members of the general body, and proper acknowledgment of work done by many people.

**3. Need**

Transparency in these matters builds trust:

It is needed in public interest, it prevents the danger of the NGO being misused for an individual's private purposes, if management of NGOs is harmonious conflict is avoided; all members work in team spirit and a giving mode.

## WHO SHOULD BE TRANSPARENT

### Actors

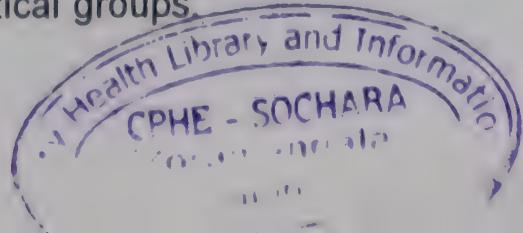
Every single member of the NGO should possess integrity and honesty of purpose. Dishonest members with nefarious designs to misuse the NGO are not being transparent. Equally, members of the Executive Committee have greater responsibility to be transparent in their functioning as the active arm of the NGO. Indeed, everyone must act as behoves, honorable, dedicated people with a cause dear to them. All have to be honest in their dealings and totally accountable.

### Reasons for non-transparency

- a) Fear of take-over of the NGO by political hawks.
- b) Too many counter-productive governmental and trust regulations.
- c) Fear of usurpation of the newly formed NGOs by some of their ambitious/ unscrupulous members.
- d) Usurpation of a NGO by one of the founders with a deeply personal agenda.
- e) Lack of support from the members to the activities of the Executive Committee.
- f) Misappropriation of large grants obtained from the government or foreign aid agencies or both.
- g) Lack of transparency of NGOs which have powerful lobbies and are into the political set-up.
- h) Work of dedicated members not being appreciated by members.

### Actions for increasing transparency

- a) Educate members of NGOs.
- b) Train Executive Heads of NGOs in ethics and values.
- c) Make charity trust more customer friendly but otherwise effective in work by preventing mischief against NGOs by political groups.



- d) Devise a way of rating NGOs by some measurable standard/performance indicators.
- e) Create a culture of "accountability" amongst NGOs.
- f) Help people (particularly, the so called educated people) to develop a culture of truth, integrity, and probity in all they do. This is a constant need.
- g) Reward transparent NGOs for excellence and mention those which are not transparent.

## 7. Possible negative consequences

a) Lack of Transparency	.leads to .creates .results in	- - -	Dishonesty Corruption Non-achievements of objectives as per MOU
b) Transparency	.leads to .results in .causes	- - -	Honest Work & Trust Achievement of objectives Sometimes danger of take-over by nefarious elements if funds of NGO are large.

## 8. Other views

"Transparency" like truth itself is an eternal value. Good NGOs should be "transparent" if they must do good work with credibility and authenticity. Every effort must therefore, be made to make the functioning of NGOs participative and transparent and "objective oriented" rather than "personalities oriented". The NGO is a public trust built brick by brick by a band of dedicated founders. That trust must be valued highly.

Our country has some of the oldest NGOs working transparently, according to rules, for many decades. These are good models of transparent NGOs. There is a need to collect their "bio-data" and set-up a national benchmarking system for performance evaluation of NGOs. More efforts at continuous improvement of NGOs will prove worthwhile in the growth of a free market democratic and a healthy society.

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## **APPENDIX**

**Dear Friend,**

Namaste! Greetings from all of us for a very meaningful and fulfilling 1997. We write this letter to invite your kind cooperation in preparing the following :

### **TRANSPARENCY IN NGOs: A Compendium of Views**

**Details :**

The Social Development Center (SDC) of the Academy of HRD is committed to facilitating Human Resources and Organisational Development of NGOs. And, this will be greatly facilitated by a deeper understanding of the internal organisational issues and challenges facing NGOs.

One of the key concerns within NGOs appears to be "lack of transparency". We have experienced this concern being expressed in many forums. The latest of these forums was the "National Reflection on Renewal and Development Experiences of NGOs that was conducted as a part of the project *Organisational Renewal for NGOs in Development Action* during December 13-15, 1996 at Hyderabad, in which 120 NGOs from across the country participated.

The SDC finds it necessary to gather more information on the issues of transparency so that this information can be collated and circulated to the NGOs and academicians. This circulation can have pay-offs such as improvement of NGO management practices, research, training, etc.

We request you to kindly take a short time from your busy schedule to answer the set of questions enclosed. May we also request you to circulate this questionnaire to others in your organisation and ask them also to respond? We shall be grateful to you if you can help us in this regard.

Will it be possible for you to send your reply so that we receive it on or before February 15, 1997? Kindly mail/fax your response to either of the undersigned.

With very sincere thanks and regards

C.Balaji

**Roshan Joseph**

# **TRANSPARENCY IN NGOs :**

## **A Compendium of Views**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

Given below is a set of questions that are aimed at getting a deeper understanding of the issue of "transparency" in NGOs. Kindly answer the questions. You need not answer these questions in the given sequence, if the sequence constrains you in any way. Please note that we are interested in your valuable opinions, at this stage there are no right or wrong answers. Please feel free to write whatever comes to your mind, without bothering to 'evaluate' your responses. Often, the top-of-mind responses are the most valuable ones.

#### **Questions :**

1. What do you understand by the term "transparency" ?
2. 'Transparency' should be in what respects ?
3. Why is transparency needed in these ?
4. Who should be transparent and to whom ?
5. Why is transparency not there now ?
6. What should be done to increase transparency?
7. What could possibly be the negative consequences of being transparent or lack of transparency ?
8. Any other comments/views regarding "transparency in NGOs".





## ACADEMY OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

The Academy of Human Resources Development is a premier academic institution devoted exclusively to further the fields of Human Resources Development (HRD) and Organisation Development (OD). Started at the initiative of the National HRD Network - which is a professional association of people interested in HRD/OD, the Academy was registered in 1993 as a non-profit society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and the Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950.

The Academy's mandate includes knowledge generation, knowledge dissemination and capacity building - all exclusively in HRD/OD. Several activities are undertaken by the Academy toward fulfilling the above mandate:

- \* ***knowledge generation*** through research, seminars, conferences, workshops and databank on HRD/OD practices;
- \* ***knowledge dissemination*** through education (doctoral, diploma and certificate programs), publication (of books, monographs, papers, video-films, periodicals and software), open management development programs; and
- \* ***capacity building for HRD/OD*** through in-house training and consultancy services.

The Academy brings out occasional papers on issues of contemporary significance. The papers are meant to disseminate HRD experiences of different organisations and their HRD Managers, research findings, conceptual contributions and other scholarly contributions to improve HRD and its implementation. Findings of research projects completed at the Academy are also made available through the occasional papers. The following occasional papers are presently available.

1. Employee Development Programme  
in a Large Multi-unit Organisation - R.R. Likhite
2. HRD Needs of Non-Governmental Organisations - Liza Thomas
3. Human Development 1994: HRD Strategies for  
India and other Developing Countries - T.V. Rao
4. Lifestyle of an Institution Builder:  
Reflections of Ravi J. Matthai - Uma Jain